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Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2164 (2014) of 25 June 2014, by which the Council renewed the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), and covers the period from 27 May to 15 September 2014. The Council requested me to report within three months of the adoption of the resolution on the implementation of the Ouagadougou preliminary agreement, the expansion of the Mission's Force presence in the north of Mali and benchmarks to assess progress in the implementation of the priority tasks of the mandate of MINUSMA.

II. Implementation of the preliminary agreement

Political process and inclusive dialogue

2. Since my last report on the situation in Mali (S/2014/403), efforts to establish peace in Mali have seen notable progress. Concerted efforts by Algeria, my Special Representative, the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and regional Governments led to the launch of formal peace negotiations between the armed groups and the Government of Mali, as called for by the preliminary agreement. The first round took place from 14 to 24 July in Algiers, which resulted in the adoption of a road map and a declaration of cessation of hostilities signed separately by the Government of Mali with two respective coalitions of armed groups, the Coordination and the Platform. A second round of negotiations, between the Government and the Coordination, and the Government and the Platform, began in early September and was still ongoing as the present report was published. This round seeks to address political, security, development, and justice and reconciliation issues.

3. In June, Algeria hosted talks with the signatory and adherent parties to the preliminary agreement. On 9 June, the Coordination, comprised of Mouvement national de libération de l'Azawad (MNLA), Haut conseil pour l'unité de l'Azawad (HCUA) and Mouvement arabe de l'Azawad (MAA), signed the Algiers Declaration pledging to coordinate their actions in the search for a negotiated settlement with the Government of Mali. On 14 June, the Platform, comprised of Coordination des mouvements et fronts patriotiques de résistance (CMFPR), Coalition du peuple pour

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l'Azawad (CPA) and another MAA faction, signed the Plateforme préliminaire d'Alger en vue du dialogue inclusif inter-malien, which reaffirmed their commitment to the territorial integrity of Mali.

4. On 15 and 16 June, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Ambassadors of Algeria, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and the Niger met in Algiers, affording my Special Representative the opportunity to reiterate the call of the Council for proper coordination among international actors in support of the Malian peace process.

5. The first phase of the Algiers peace negotiations began on 14 July. The talks were supported by a mediation team led by Algeria and comprising the United Nations/MINUSMA, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the European Union and Burkina Faso, Mauritania, the Niger and Chad. This initial phase was dedicated to the elaboration of a road map for negotiations and the security situation in northern Mali. The Coordination and the Platform delegations refused to sit at the same table, leading to a two-track process. As discussions on which armed groups should be represented at the table took place in Algiers, hostilities broke out between elements of MNLA and MAA (Coordination) on one side, and MAA (Platform) and other armed groups (including Imghad militias perceived to be close to the Government) on the other side, in the area of Tabankort (Gao region). As a result of those clashes, the scope of the talks was enlarged to include the negotiation of a cessation of hostilities agreement led by my Special Representative.

6. On 24 July, after two weeks of discussions, the Government of Mali signed two important documents, the road map for negotiations in the context of the Algiers process and the declaration of cessation of hostilities, separately with both the Coordination and the Platform. The two-track nature of the process remains a challenge for the negotiation of a comprehensive and inclusive peace process.

7. The road map reaffirms the key principles enacted by the preliminary agreement — respect for Mali's unity, territorial integrity and secularism — and provides the framework for the negotiations. It organizes the talks around four thematic areas: political and institutional issues; defence and security issues; economic development, social and cultural issues; and reconciliation, justice and humanitarian issues. While no provision was made for the direct involvement of civil society in the talks, the parties subsequently agreed to organize "hearings" with civil society in Algiers immediately before the second round of negotiations. On 21 August, Algeria and Mali agreed that each of the three parties (Government, Coordination and Platform) would nominate 18 members of local communities and civil society organizations to participate in these sessions.

8. The declaration of cessation of hostilities, signed in response to the clashes in the Tabankort area (Gao region), reaffirms the commitment of the parties to the preliminary agreement, to the ceasefire agreement of 23 May and to Security Council resolution 2164 (2014). The parties agreed to establish a Joint Commission comprising representatives from the Government of Mali and the armed groups, to be chaired by MINUSMA, to lead mediation efforts on the ground to consolidate the cessation of hostilities.

9. From 25 to 28 August, the Platform and the Coordination met in Ouagadougou to discuss the peace process and enhance coherence ahead of the second phase of

negotiations in Algiers. Following a request from the Government and the armed groups for tailored training on negotiation skills and thematic areas, MINUSMA funded the organization of training sessions in the margins of the meeting. At the conclusion of their meeting, the armed groups signed a joint declaration promising, inter alia, to "end hostilities among the people of northern Mali".

10. The civil society "hearings" took place from 4 to 9 September. The representatives exchanged views on the root causes of the conflict and shared proposals in the four thematic areas of the road map. While the "hearings" suggested a commonality of views on the root causes of the conflict, they also illustrated the diversity of views among the various stakeholders on the way forward. The thematic groups' chairs have since summarized and presented the recommendations from the "hearings" to the entire mediation team. Meanwhile, the mediation team and the parties continued discussions on the process and the format of the negotiations.

11. In an effort to build consensus on the outcomes of the first round of negotiations, President Keïta initiated consultations with key stakeholders, including Malian Defence and Security Forces, political leaders, senior civil servants and civil society to share information on the negotiation process and solicit views. On 31 July, Prime Minister Moussa Mara briefed the Presidents of the National Assembly, the High Court of Justice, the Economic, Social and Cultural Council and members of the Supreme Court on the road map and the declaration of cessation of hostilities. He held similar meetings with the High Council of the *collectivités territoriales* and women leaders on 1 August, and with political parties on 5 August.

12. MINUSMA and national authorities also organized a series of workshops to facilitate the contribution of political parties and civil society to the dialogue and reconciliation process. This series of workshops gathered journalists in Selingué from 29 May to 1 June, women leaders in Bamako on 15 and 16 July, and a local youth organization in Ségou from 5 to 7 August. Finally, from 12 to 14 August, representatives of 192 political parties, members of the presidential majority and the opposition participated in a three-day consultative workshop on the peace process. The political parties recommended, inter alia, more transparency on the management of the crisis in the north and the inclusion of political parties and civil society organizations in the negotiations in Algiers.

Cessation of hostilities

13. The reporting period was marred by ceasefire violations — territorial gains made by the armed groups and clashes between armed groups including self-defence militias, reportedly ethnic-based and close to the Government — and human rights violations, in particular serious violations of children's rights in contravention of article 10 of the preliminary agreement. The Malian Defence and Security Forces have largely withdrawn from the north following the resumption of hostilities in Kidal in May. They exert effective control only over the cities of Gao and Timbuktu. While 1,214 members of the Forces continue to share bases with MINUSMA in Tessalit (Kidal region) and Ménaka (Gao region), their weapons are stored and they rarely exit the camps.

14. Article 10 of the preliminary agreement and the ceasefire agreement of 23 May provides for the end of all military operations and attempts to occupy new positions.

However, on 30 May, MNLA and MAA (Coordination) occupied Ber town, 60 km east of Timbuktu. On 19 June, MINUSMA confirmed that MNLA had taken control of N'Tillit, 140 km south-west of Gao, where elements of CPA are also present. On 26 July, suspected MNLA elements reportedly entered and paraded in Bamba (Gao region).

15. With regard to fighting between armed groups, on 11 July, south-west of Anefis (Kidal region), elements from MNLA/MAA (Coordination) clashed with MAA (Platform) and armed groups perceived to be close to the Government. On 12 July, the Platform and its allies established control over an area adjacent to Tabankort (Gao region), 40 km south-west of Anefis. On 19 and 20 July, in Tabankort, fighting erupted anew between MNLA and MAA (Platform), who reportedly captured prisoners. Following negotiations led by my Special Representative, on 21 July, MNLA handed over to MINUSMA 11 non-combatant prisoners affiliated with MAA (Platform). Meanwhile, the latter confirmed that about 20 fighters from MNLA and MAA (Coordination) were in its custody. On 24 July, the Government of Mali signed the declaration of cessation of hostilities with the Coordination and the Platform, respectively, in Algiers. On 9 August, further clashes erupted in Lerneb (Timbuktu region) between MAA (Platform) and MAA (Coordination). MINUSMA troops, deployed in Lerneb on 12 August, facilitated a cessation of hostilities that enabled the return of civilians to the area.

16. The Commission technique mixte de sécurité, established by article 7 of the preliminary agreement, resumed its work during the reporting period. On 13 June, the parties developed the implementation modalities of the ceasefire agreement of 23 May. On 16 July, they designed mixed observation and monitoring teams, which comprise representatives of the MINUSMA force, the Malian Defence and Security Forces, MNLA, HCUA and MAA (Coordination). The mixed observation and monitoring teams are mandated to assess reported allegations of abuse and/or provocations by the parties of the ceasefire agreement of 23 May. The first mixed observation and monitoring team was deployed from 23 to 25 July to Tessit, Tillit and Ndaki (Gao region) to investigate the presence of armed groups in these areas. It reported on 30 July to the MINUSMA Force Commander in his capacity as President of the Commission technique mixte de sécurité. As at 15 September, two other mixed observation and monitoring teams were waiting for the endorsement of the Commission technique mixte de sécurité to start operations in Kidal and Timbuktu regions.

17. The Joint Commission established by the 24 July declaration of cessation of hostilities was also chaired by MINUSMA, but, unlike the Commission technique mixte de sécurité, it included the Platform and the Coordination. The Commission held its first meetings in Gao, Tabankort and Anefis between 30 July and 7 August, including consultations with the representatives of the warring factions in Anefis and Tabankort. The Commission recommended the reinforcement of the MINUSMA presence in the Tabankort, Anefis, Almoustarat and Tarkint areas through the deployment of ground and air patrols and the establishment of checkpoints. It also recommended that the Commission technique mixte de sécurité send the mixed observation and monitoring team to these areas and define terms for the liberation of prisoners. MINUSMA positioned forces in Almoustarat and Tabankort, from where they cover Tarkint and Anefis, respectively. This encouraged the return of the civilian population and facilitated access for humanitarian actors. The Gao mixed observation and monitoring team monitored the ceasefire in and around Tabankort.

An initial exchange of prisoners took place in August, but outside the Commission technique mixte de sécurité framework (see below). On 7 August, the Commission finalized its work and submitted its final report to Algeria as lead mediator. With the resumption of talks in Algiers, the parties agreed to disband the Commission. Should new confrontations arise, they will be examined by the Commission technique mixte de sécurité and the mixed observation and monitoring teams.

18. On 12 September, on the margins of the negotiations in Algiers, the Government, the Coordination and the Platform agreed to open the membership of the Commission technique mixte de sécurité to CMFPR, CPA, MAA (Coalition), and MAA (Platform), as well as to representatives from Algeria, Chad, Mauritania and the Niger, and to adjust the Mixed Observation and Monitoring Team accordingly.

19. The breaches of the ceasefire increased security risks for civilians and resulted in human rights violations, in breach of article 10 of the preliminary agreement. After MNLA took the town of Aguelhok on 21 May, 66 Imghad Tuareg civilian men, fearing for their security, sought refuge in the MINUSMA camp. They stayed there until 3 July, when MINUSMA negotiated their safe return with MNLA and HCUA. The clashes that took place from 11 to 26 July in Anefis and Tabankort resulted in the killing of at least 4 civilians and the forced displacement of 56 women and 72 children. On 18 August, six men were severely beaten by MNLA in Ménaka (Gao region) for wearing t-shirts bearing the colours of the Malian flag. In Lerneb, MAA (Coordination) has curtailed the movements of members of the Arab community suspected of being MAA (Platform) sympathizers.

20. MINUSMA confirmed the presence of children in the ranks of MNLA, HCUA and MAA (both Coordination and Platform) in Timbuktu, Mopti, Gao and Kidal regions. The Mission also documented the military use of at least 12 schools by MNLA, HCUA, MAA (Coordination) and CPA. On 4 September in Ber, with the support of MINUSMA, the joint MAA-MNLA military leadership committed to sign a command order prohibiting the recruitment of children and to allow the Mission to screen its troops on 16 and 17 September. While two boys detained by the Government for their alleged association with armed groups were released during the July prisoner exchange between the Government and armed groups in northern Mali, five children remain in Government detention. The Ministry of Justice has pledged to swiftly address this matter and appointed a new government focal point for all issues related to children on 9 June. Meanwhile, MINUSMA came across four alleged minors in the course of prison monitoring visits carried out on 30 and 31 July. Should it be confirmed that they are below 18 years of age, the number of children detained by the Government for their alleged association with armed groups would be nine.

21. While article 11 of the preliminary agreement provides for the cantonment and progressive redeployment of the Malian Defence and Security Forces, the operation of the three pre-cantonment sites was suspended and the progressive deployment of the Malian Defence and Security Forces derailed by the resumption of hostilities in Kidal in May. MINUSMA suspended the provision of food to and the construction of the first three pre-cantonment sites in Kidal region. During the Commission technique mixte de sécurité meetings, the Government said it was ready to proceed with reconnaissance of future cantonment sites. The signatory groups held that such a decision should be taken at the political level by the Comité de suivi et

d'évaluation established by the preliminary agreement, but Comité meetings to date have been postponed.

22. The "cantonment" that emerged from the initiative of CMFPR I and II, MAA (Platform) and its pro-Government allies in the Gao, Mopti and Timbuktu regions, is a source of concern. CMFPR I and II are regrouping some of their elements in the hope that they will be included in future cantonment/disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes. In Ansongo (Gao region), some 500 elements, few of whom carried light weapons, regrouped for one week in early July. Such gatherings may have been recruitment drives or posturing ahead of the start of the second phase of negotiations in Algiers. MINUSMA organized a series of awareness-raising meetings in the north on the purpose of cantonment and on the mandate of MINUSMA in this regard.

Deployment of administrative and social services, humanitarian access and confidence-building measures

23. Security concerns, accentuated by the low deployment of defence and security forces, hampered the redeployment of the civilian administration in the northern regions, as called for by article 12 of the preliminary agreement. In the aftermath of the May events, 1 governor (Kidal) and 26 prefects and subprefects from the Gao, Kidal and Mopti regions left their posts in the north. Currently, 60 per cent of prefects and 75 per cent of subprefects are deployed in the Gao, Mopti and Timbuktu regions. Armed groups have created a parallel administration for the management of public affairs in Kidal and Ménaka called "city management commissions".

24. Since my last report (S/2014/403), some 118 judicial personnel and magistrates have redeployed to the Gao, Mopti and Timbuktu regions. There are still, however, no representatives of the judiciary in Kidal, which remains a concern. Meanwhile, the Government passed on 4 July a decree appointing additional prosecutors and magistrates nationwide. In support of the redeployment of State administration, MINUSMA and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) organized a series of workshops in June and July to train some 140 magistrates, judicial police officers, prison administrators and guards in Gao, Timbuktu and Mopti regions, including 29 women. On 29 August, the Prime Minister travelled to Timbuktu and Niafunke to inaugurate public offices — a prefecture, a subprefecture, tribunals and a gendarmerie — that had been renovated under a joint UNDP-MINUSMA project.

25. In accordance with article 12 of the preliminary agreement, access to basic social services had improved before the resumption of hostilities in May. In the area of education, thanks to the "back-to-school" campaign led by the Ministry of Education, with the support of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and other partners, 983 schools reopened (74 per cent of a total of 1,320 schools operating before the crisis) and 4,424 teachers resumed their functions (77 per cent of the 5,772 teachers posted in the north before the crisis). However, following the May events, seven schools closed in Kidal, preventing 772 children from completing the 2013/14 academic year. In the health sector, access to basic health services improved in Gao and Timbuktu, while the situation in Kidal remains precarious. The World Health Organization (WHO) funded the return of 70 per cent

of health workers in areas affected by the conflict, and UNICEF supported 105 health facilities with medical supplies. However, only 50 per cent of health workers remained in Gao and Timbuktu regions as at July 2014, owing to the insecurity.

26. Article 13 of the preliminary agreement provides that the parties will facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance but security concerns continue to hamper humanitarian operations. Following threats to its staff, one international non-governmental organization suspended its operations in the Kidal region in early August. On 4 August, in Kidal, the Humanitarian Coordinator stressed to the armed groups and communities that it was essential that they help ensure the safety of humanitarian workers. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs subsequently undertook outreach missions to Ménaka, Kidal and Ouagadougou. Armed groups and humanitarian actors agreed to strengthen exchanges and establish monthly local civil-military coordination meetings.

27. In spite of article 13 of the preliminary agreement calling upon the parties to facilitate the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees, the resumption of hostilities has led to new displacements and reversed a trend of steady returns to the northern regions by IDPs and refugees (even if mostly to urban centres). Only 10,000 IDPs returned to the north since my last report, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has not registered any refugee returns. Burkina Faso, Mauritania and the Niger continue to host some 140,000 Malian refugees (compared with 177,000 at the height of displacement). On 26 and 27 August, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees visited Mali and stressed the need for security and political stability to create a conducive environment for the safe, voluntary and sustainable return of refugees and displaced people.

28. Article 18 of the preliminary agreement provides for the release of all conflict-related detainees. On 15 July, the Government of Mali released 42 conflict-related detainees, all members and sympathizers of MNLA, HCUA or MAA (Coordination) whose names were included in a list of 69 names presented by these armed groups. In return, the armed groups released the 45 members of the Malian Defence and Security Forces captured during the fighting in Kidal in May. In some cases, the release of prisoners who were under investigation or charged with war crimes, terrorism, religious crimes and ethnic crimes raises concerns, as these measures may hamper Mali's obligations to investigate, prosecute and provide redress for violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. The Government released a former member of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) on 8 July, a former leader of the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) on 9 August and a MUJAO member appointed to judicial functions by the terrorist groups during the occupation of the north on 15 August, on various legal grounds, including lack of evidence and procedural flaws. Two of these names were on the list presented by the armed groups.

29. Article 18 of the preliminary agreement and the ceasefire agreement of 23 May also called for the establishment of an international commission of inquiry on serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. On 10 July, the Minister of Justice and Human Rights wrote to me seeking United Nations support for the establishment of such an international commission of inquiry to look into serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law

committed between 1 January 2012 and the establishment of the commission. In line with Security Council resolution 2164 (2014), I have asked MINUSMA to develop draft terms of reference and to share them with all the parties to the preliminary agreement.

III. Expansion of the Mission presence in northern Mali

30. As at 1 September, MINUSMA had reached 71 per cent of its planned deployment figures for both uniformed and civilian personnel. Over 80 per cent of all MINUSMA staff and 90 per cent of uniformed personnel are already based in the northern regions.

31. The Force is present outside major urban centres and conducts regular long-range patrols in rural areas. In addition to its four main bases in Gao, Kidal, Tessalit and Timbuktu and the smaller camps of Aguelhok Ansongo, Diabali, Douentsa, Gossi, Goundam, Ménaka and Sevarée, the Force established temporary detachments in Ber, Léré and Lerneb and a presence in Tabankort and Anefis during the reporting period.

32. The Force has also been able to enhance measures for the protection of civilians, thanks to the deployment of key force multipliers. The MINUSMA All Source Information Fusion Unit, based in Gao, has become fully operational, substantially enhancing the Mission situational awareness. Starting in June, the Mission's four attack helicopters have conducted an average of five surveillance missions weekly, with a specific focus on the protection of civilian populations in the north. Three unarmed unmanned aerial systems have also started surveillance flights. In June, 96 Special Operation Forces elements deployed to Gao and started weekly monitoring patrols in the region, focusing on areas not covered by the MINUSMA military bases.

33. On 31 May, following the entry of MNLA/MAA (Coordination) fighters in Ber (Timbuktu region), MINUSMA established a temporary presence there. Patrols are still ongoing, in spite of the suicide attack against the Mission that killed two peacekeepers and injured seven others in Ber on 16 August. Following clashes between MNLA/MAA (Coordination) and MAA (Platform) and its allied forces in the region of Tabankort (Gao region), MINUSMA conducted four air surveillance missions over the area on 14, 19 and 20 July. The Force established a temporary detachment in Tabankort on 12 July and started conducting daily ground patrols in the Anefis and Tabankort areas on 14 July.

34. Planning for the further expansion of the Mission's presence through mobile and static means, as mandated under Security Council resolution 2164 (2014), is under way. Many of the tasks to be performed in these locations, however, remain contingent on progress in the Algiers peace negotiations. During the reporting period, MINUSMA developed new plans to expand the Mission outreach beyond the main population centres, as provided by Security Council resolution 2164 (2014). This expansion is likely to have a significant budgetary impact, as the current 2014-2015 budget only provided for the construction of four main bases, in Gao, Kidal, Tessalit and Timbuktu. Construction efforts at the four main bases are progressing; contractors have completed 60 per cent of horizontal works in Gao and Timbuktu and 25 per cent in Kidal; they are mobilizing equipment to start work in Tessalit. The two military engineering companies are currently constructing two

minor camps in Ansongo and Aguelhok. The proportion of civilian staff deployed in the north should start increasing in the first quarter of 2015, with a target of 50 per cent of all civilian staff to be based in the north, subject to finalization of construction at the Mission's main deployment locations (mostly Gao and Timbuktu) and the availability of sufficient minimum operating security standards: compliant accommodation and office space.

35. Construction efforts in northern Mali are hindered by security and climate conditions, which limit the capacity of key enablers and contractors. Adverse weather conditions affect the air and road movements of the Mission. Travel time by road to destinations in northern Mali increases on average by 50 per cent during the rainy season, prolonging the commitment of the Force for the protection of convoys. Additionally, although all military engineering units have deployed (one combat military engineering company and three construction military engineering companies), one of the construction engineering companies continues to lack requisite heavy engineering equipment. MINUSMA still has no military utility helicopters at its disposal, and has compensated for the absence of military utility helicopters by contracting commercial helicopters. (Three CH-47 military heavy transport helicopters arrived in Mali during the reporting period; they are expected to be operational on 1 October.) A C-130 military transport aircraft deployed on 1 September (a three-month commitment). The arrival of a commercial Aero Medical Evacuation Team on 28 July has enhanced the strategic medical evacuation capacity of the Mission. French forces have, however, continued assisting MINUSMA with essential in extremis support, including medical evacuation.

Safety and security challenges

36. The withdrawal of the Malian Defence and Security Forces from most of northern Mali, the absence of effective control by the armed groups over the areas gained from the Malian Defence and Security Forces in May and the gradual drawdown and reconfiguration of French operation Serval/Barkhane have given way to a marked increase in the activities of extremist groups. With its network of bases and its extended movements, MINUSMA has become their primary target.

37. Between 27 May and 15 September, a total of 27 attacks targeted MINUSMA premises and personnel (15 improvised explosive device or mine incidents and 12 rocket or mortar fire incidents). On 11 June, in Aguelhok, a suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive device killed four peacekeepers and injured six, along with four Malian Defence and Security Forces elements. On 30 June, 20 km west of Timbuktu, an improvised explosive device attack killed one peacekeeper and wounded seven others; the device was likely operated by remote control. On 18 July, a MINUSMA force convoy was hit by a remote-controlled improvised explosive device 500 metres from the Kidal MINUSMA camp. One peacekeeper was injured. On 20 July, MINUSMA vehicles ran over two improvised explosive devices in the vicinity of Aguelhok, slightly wounding one peacekeeper. On 14 August, two peacekeepers were injured when their vehicle hit an improvised explosive device on the Tessalit-Aguelhok road. On 15 August, one peacekeeper was injured owing to an improvised explosive device/mine explosion near Agulehok. On 16 August, the MINUSMA temporary presence in Ber (Timbuktu region) was attacked by a suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive device, resulting in two peacekeepers killed and seven injured. On 29 August, a Force

vehicle hit a mine on the Tessalit-Aguelhok road, injuring nine peacekeepers, including two seriously. On 2 September, an explosive device, suspected to be an improvised explosive device loaded with home-made explosives, killed four peacekeepers and wounded 14 others on the road between Kidal and Aguelhok. On 14 September, a MINUSMA military vehicle hit an improvised explosive device during a patrol conducted in the vicinity of Aguelhok. One peacekeeper was killed by the explosion, and four others were wounded. The Mission has developed a counter-improvised explosive device action plan that includes strengthened physical measures, specialized equipment and additional pre- and post-deployment training for MINUSMA staff and contingents.

38. Two improvised explosive device incidents occurred in the vicinity of the Kidal airstrip on 10 July and 29 July, affecting movement of supplies and personnel. On 10 July, a vehicle conducting runway security clearance drove over an anti-tank mine that partially detonated. On 29 July, while conducting regular maintenance of the Kidal airstrip, a MINUSMA force heavy duty vehicle hit an improvised explosive device 20 metres from the runway, wouding one peacekeeper. There were no fatalities, but the runway was closed for 30 days. The Mission built a ditch and a berm and erected observation towers and light towers to prevent intrusions on the runway, which reopened on 29 August.

39. Mission facilities continued to be targeted by rocket attacks. The risk level further escalated during the reporting period, as MINUSMA also came under mortar fire. On 12 July, three rockets exploded south of Timbuktu airport. On 15 July, a 122-mm rocket landed 1 km northwest of the MINUSMA camp in Aguelhok. On 17 July, another rocket was launched 1 km east of the MINUSMA camp in Tessalit. On 22 July, two mortar bombs were fired near the MINUSMA camp in Aguelhok. The mortars respectively landed 68 and 70 metres east of the camp. On 27 August, eight mortar shells were fired towards the MINUSMA camp in Aguelhok; two landed respectively within 50 and 65 metres of the MINUSMA camp. None of these incidents caused casualties or damage.

40. On 31 August, AQIM claimed responsibility for the 30 June attack near Timbuktu, the Ber attack of 16 August and the rockets launched against Timbuktu airport on 12 July.

41. From 3 to 10 September, MINUSMA conducted operations with the support of its armed helicopters on the Tessalit-Aguelhok axis in order to impede the access of terrorist groups and reduce pressure on MINUSMA units based in Aguelhok. On 4 September, the Mission force arrested a person accused of having planned an attack against MINUSMA and handed him over to Malian gendarmerie in Bamako.

42. Heavy storms have also been a source of concern for the safety of MINUSMA personnel. On 28 June, a violent storm caused extensive damage to the town of Aguelhok and the MINUSMA camp there. On 22 July, a sandstorm damaged 95 per cent of the tents in the MINUSMA Kidal camp; 31 peacekeepers were injured, including five seriously, and one peacekeeper succumbed from his injuries on 31 August. On 2 August, another violent storm destroyed all the MINUSMA tents in Tessalit, injuring one peacekeeper. On 18 August, thunderstorms damaged the Tessalit base, which is jointly occupied by MINUSMA, the Malian Defence and Security Forces and French Operation Barkhane, killing two Malian soldiers and injuring two others. MINUSMA is procuring new tents that resist winds up to 150 km/hour.

Ebola virus disease

43. To date, no case of Ebola virus disease has been reported in Mali. Yet, Ebola cases have been confirmed in north-eastern Guinea, in an area bordering the southern part of Mali, relatively close to the capital, Bamako. Moreover, the three intensely affected countries — Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone — and the two countries with localized transmission — Nigeria and Senegal — all contribute troops to MINUSMA. The Ebola case confirmed in Senegal may have further implications for the Mission, as the referral level III hospital towards which the most severe cases are evacuated is located in Dakar. In addition, Senegal is the MINUSMA evacuation location in case of emergency. The Mission has put in place close epidemiological surveillance and movement control measures for personnel travelling from, to and through countries affected by Ebola. In August, MINUSMA postponed the deployment of a Nigerian formed police unit and the arrival of a convoy of equipment from Guinea pending medical clearance. The Mission has conducted bi-weekly awareness-raising sessions for staff and set up an isolation ward near the military camp close to Bamako airport.

IV. Development of benchmarks

44. Resolution 2164 (2014) requested me to report on benchmarks to assess progress on the implementation of the priority tasks of the mandate of MINUSMA. On 19 August, the MINUSMA leadership agreed with the Minister for Foreign Affairs that MINUSMA and the Government would collaborate to develop benchmarks that can reflect a shared understanding of priority actions in the context of the mandate of MINUSMA. Terms of reference are being finalized. In line with existing United Nations and Government plans, the Mission will also consult the country team and other key partners. Benchmarks, indicators and monitoring mechanisms will be included in my next report due in December.

V. Observations

45. The start of the second phase of negotiations in Algiers represents a positive step forward on the road to peace and reconciliation in Mali. The delay of the talks since the signing of the Ouagadougou preliminary agreement has had negative consequences for Mali and its citizens, as illustrated by the resumption of armed hostilities in May and more recently by the increasing number of inter-community clashes in northern Mali. I urge the Government, the armed movements and all civil society actors to intensify their efforts to work together in earnest, in close cooperation with my Special Representative, to bring about a process that delivers on the hopes of the Malian people. I welcome the leading role of Algeria in organizing the talks and the coordination role played by my Special Representative, as well as the involvement of ECOWAS, the African Union, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the European Union, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Niger and Chad in the mediation effort.

46. The ongoing talks in Algiers present an opportunity that cannot be missed, if Mali is to find a sustainable solution to the recent crisis. All armed movements in Mali should cease hostilities immediately and prioritize the preparations for the

cantonment process, as provided by the preliminary agreement, in order to show their commitment to peace and security and to build confidence during the talks. Moreover, all parties should recognize the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the Malian State. I encourage all parties to negotiate in good faith and in a spirit of inclusiveness so as to address all grievances. I also call on all parties to strongly condemn, reject and actively combat acts of terrorism, recognizing that they are criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation, wherever, whenever and by whomever committed.

47. I salute the efforts undertaken by President Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta to apprise various segments of Malian society on the political process prior to the second round of peace negotiation in Algiers. It was also positive that the second phase of the Algiers peace negotiations started with exchanges involving civil society representatives. The modalities for the inclusion of all northern communities in the peace process — as provided by article 21 of the preliminary agreement — remain to be defined. The success of the Algiers talks is critical to the long-term stability of the entire country. This can only be achieved through an inclusive process that is supported across the entire country.

48. Despite the launch of the negotiation process in Algeria, the increasing number of clashes in the Tabankort, Ber and Lerneb areas remains a serious concern, which will no doubt continue to weigh heavily on the Algiers negotiations and the security situation on the ground. I call on the leaders of all parties to take steps to prevent further hostilities, including calling for restraint on the part of their allies. I am wary of the risk that fighting between armed groups may give way to intercommunal clashes similar to those that claimed many lives earlier this year, and which may ultimately derail the peace process.

49. I commend the quick intervention of the Mission in many locations where clashes took place and in areas with high risks of confrontation through the deployment of peacekeepers and mediation efforts to ease the tension and protect civilians. All parties should be reminded that these clashes are against the letter and spirit of the Ouagadougou preliminary agreement, the ceasefire agreement and the ongoing talks in Algiers.

50. The resumption of the work of the Commission technique mixte de sécurité and the establishment of the mixed observation and monitoring team in Gao to monitor ceasefire violations is a welcome step. Through the operationalization of this first Mixed Observation and Monitoring Team, MINUSMA has been able to increase its efforts to support the implementation of the ceasefire agreement and to contribute to confidence building between the Government and the Coordination. I call on the Government and the two coalitions of armed groups, the Coordination and the Platform members of the Algiers process, to work together and in collaboration with MINUSMA towards the establishment of the remaining mixed observation and monitoring teams. This is necessary to allow the effective monitoring of ceasefire violations in the other northern regions of Mali.

51. I remain concerned about the continuing restricted access to basic services faced by ordinary citizens across northern Mali, including health care and schools, particularly in view of the beginning of the academic year in Mali in October 2014. Moreover, I regret that humanitarian workers in Kidal have been threatened. I encourage constructive engagement by all parties in order to guarantee respect for humanitarian principles and protection of civilians. I call upon all parties to

unconditionally respect their commitment to guarantee full access of humanitarian organizations across northern Mali and to ensure the safety of humanitarian workers at all times, in accordance with Security Council resolution 2164 (2014). It is critical that all parties continue to work closely with MINUSMA to facilitate the protection of civilians and expand humanitarian and development access.

52. The recent release of three known perpetrators of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law during the crisis of 2012 is concerning. It sends the wrong message regarding accountability for human rights violations. All perpetrators of violations and human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law should be held accountable. I call on the Government of Mali to pay due concern to the need to bring perpetrators of violent crimes to justice and to continue to cooperate with the International Criminal Court, in accordance with Mali's obligations under the Rome Statute. I also remind the armed groups of their repeated commitments to promote and protect human rights, and urge them to distance themselves from perpetrators of human rights violations.

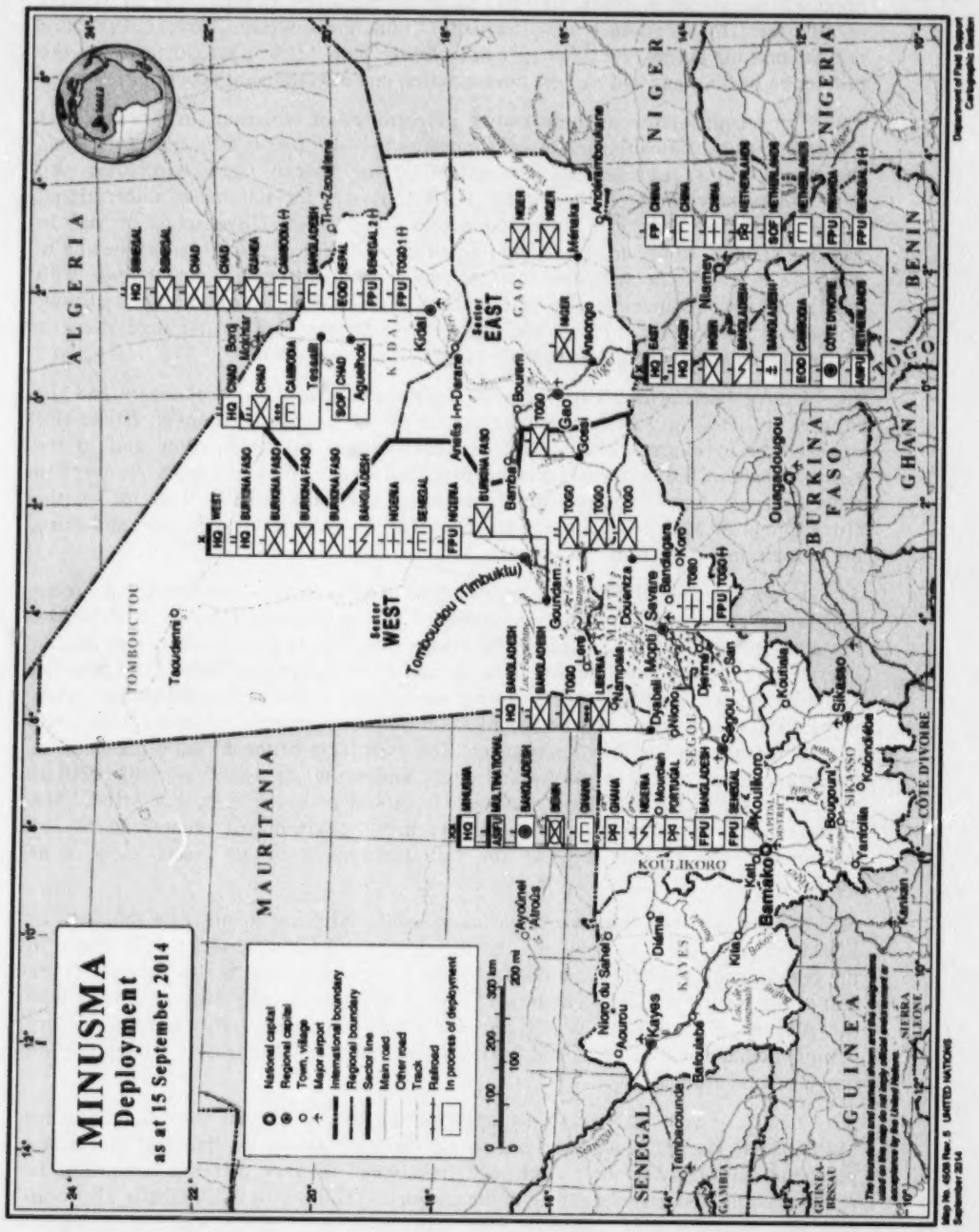
53. I have been profoundly saddened by the death of 12 peacekeepers and the injuries inflicted to 51 others in the course of the past three months. I take this opportunity to express once again my condolences to the families and to the Governments of the deceased peacekeepers, and wish a full and speedy recovery to those injured. Acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable. I count on the Government of Mali to do its utmost to swiftly investigate these attacks and bring the perpetrators to justice.

54. I commend MINUSMA for its efforts to expand its presence outside the main population centres in the north, as requested by the Security Council. MINUSMA has already established 12 bases in the north, from where peacekeepers continue to operate in extremely challenging security and climatic circumstances. The Mission is deploying considerable efforts to upgrade existing bases and establish new ones, in addition to efforts to expand the Mission outreach through increased long-range patrolling and other mobile approaches. The expansion of the Mission presence is, however, going to be a long-term and costly endeavour, for which we will continue to require support from Member States. It should be underlined that MINUSMA operates in a particularly complex security environment characterized by asymmetric attacks that requires the full deployment of all assets as soon as possible.

55. I welcome the proactive steps taken by the Mission to mitigate the risks of Ebola contamination. I encourage the Mission to remain alert and to contribute to the contingency planning undertaken by the Government and WHO, as well as the rest of the United Nations system. MINUSMA will also coordinate very closely with the planned United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response to ensure complementarity of efforts and efficient use of available assets, including on preparedness aspects.

56. Lastly, I wish to express my appreciation to my Special Representative for Mali, Albert Gerard Koenders, and to all United Nations civilian and uniformed personnel in Mali for their continued hard work in very difficult conditions to restore lasting peace and stability in the country. I would also like to thank all troop- and police-contributing countries, the African Union, ECOWAS, the European Union and bilateral partners, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, non-governmental organizations and all other partners for their important contributions to support the peace process in Mali.

Annex I


MINUSMA
Deployment
as at 15 September 2014
National capital
Regional capital
Town, village
Major airport
International boundary
Regional boundary
Sector line
Main road
Other road
Track
Railroad
In process of deployment
ALGERIA
MAURITANIA
NIGER
NIGERIA
BENIN
TOGO
GHANA
BURKINA FASO
GUINEA
SENEGAL
Sector WEST
Sector EAST
Tombouctou (Timbuktu)
Gao
Kidal
Bamako
Mopti
Ségou
Sikasso
Koulikoro
Kayes
Ménaka
Ansongo
Niamey
Ouagadougou
Abidjan
Conakry
Dakar
Banjul
Bissau
KIDAL
GAO
TOMBOUCTOU
MOPTI
SEGOU
KOULIKORO
KAYES
SIKASSO
0 100 200 300 km
0 100 200 250 mi
Map No. 4536 Rev. 5 UNITED NATIONS
September 2014

Annex II

United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali: military and police strength as at 1 September 2014

	Military			*Police*								
	Staff officers and units			*Individual police officers*			*Formed police units*			*Total Police*		
Country	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
Albania			–			–			–			–
Algeria			–			–			–			–
Argentina			–			–			–			–
Armenia			–			–			–			–
Australia			–			–			–			–
Austria			–			–			–			–
Bangladesh	1 451	4	1 455			–	139		139	139		139
Belgium			–	9	1	10			–	9	1	10
Benin	253		253			–			–			–
Bolivia			–			–			–			–
Bosnia and Herzegovina			–			–			–			–
Botswana			–			–			–			–
Brazil			–			–			–			–
Brunei Darussalam			–			–			–			–
Bulgaria			–			–			–			–
Burkina Faso	850	10	860	16	2	18			–	16	2	18
Burundi			–	11		11			–	11		11
Cambodia	304	4	308			–			–			–
Cameroon			–	5		5			–	5		5
Canada			–			–			–			–
Central African Republic			–			–			–			–
Chad	1 205		1 205	6		6			–			6
Chile			–			–			–			–
China	389	12	401			–			–			–
Colombia			–			–			–			–
Congo			–			–			–			–
Côte d'Ivoire	121		121	7		7			–	7		7
Croatia			–			–			–			–
Cyprus			–			–			–			–
Czech Republic			–			–			–			–

	Military			Police								
	Staff officers and units			Individual police officers			Formed police units			Total Police		
Country	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Democratic Republic of the Congo			–	5	1	6			–	5	1	6
Denmark	9	1	10			–			–			–
Djibouti			–	1		1			–	1		1
Dominica			–			–			–			–
Dominican Republic	1	1	2									
Ecuador			–			–			–			–
Egypt			–	2		2			–	2		2
El Salvador			–			–			–			–
Estonia	2		2			–			–			–
Ethiopia			–									
Fiji			–			–			–			–
Finland	6		6			–			–			–
France	15		15	5		5			–	5		5
Gabon			–			–			–			–
Gambia	2		2			–			–			–
Germany	5	2	7	7	1	8			–	7	1	8
Ghana	160		160	1		1			–	1		1
Greece			–			–			–			–
Grenada			–			–			–			–
Guatemala			–			–			–			–
Guinea	164		164	2	1	3			–	2	1	3
Guinea-Bissau	1		1			–			–			–
Honduras			–			–			–			–
Hungary			–			–			–			–
Iceland			–			–			–			–
India			–			–			–			–
Indonesia			–			–			–			–
Ireland			–			–			–			–
Israel			–			–			–			–
Italy	2		2			–			–			–
Jamaica			–			–			–			–
Japan			–			–			–			–
Jordan			–	2		2			–	2		2
Kazakhstan			–			–			–			–
Kenya	1		1			–			–			–

	Military			Police								
	Staff officers and units			Individual police officers			Formed police units			Total Police		
Country	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Kyrgyzstan			–			–			–			–
Lesotho			–			–			–			–
Liberia	45	4	49			–			–			–
Libya			–			–			–			–
Lithuania			–			–			–			–
Luxembourg			–			–			–			–
Madagascar			–	2		2			–	2		2
Malawi			–			–			–			–
Malaysia			–			–			–			–
Mauritania	6		6			–			–			–
Moldova, Republic of			–			–			–			–
Mongolia			–			–			–			–
Montenegro			–			–			–			–
Morocco			–			–			–			–
Mozambique			–			–			–			–
Namibia			–			–			–			–
Nepal	141	4	145	12		12			–	12		12
Netherlands	519	20	539			–			–			–
New Zealand			–			–			–			–
Niger	858	4	862	5	1	6			–	5	1	6
Nigeria	162	14	176	1		1	120	20	140	121	20	141
Norway	16	2	18			–			–			–
Pakistan			–			–			–			–
Palau			–			–			–			–
Papua New Guinea			–			–			–			–
Paraguay			–			–			–			–
Peru			–			–			–			–
Philippines			–			–			–			–
Poland			–			–			–			–
Portugal	49		49			–			–			–
Qatar			–			–			–			–
Republic of Korea			–			–			–			–
Romania			–			–			–			–
Russian Federation			–			–			–			–
Rwanda	6		6	2	1	3	123	17	140	125	18	143

Country	Military			Police								
	Staff officers and units			Individual police officers			Formed police units			Total Police		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Samoa			–			–			–			–
Senegal	521	2	523	4	2	6	278	2	280	282	4	286
Serbia			–			–			–			–
Sierra Leone	4		4			–			–			–
Singapore			–			–			–			–
Slovakia			–			–			–			–
Slovenia			–			–			–			–
South Africa			–			–			–			–
Spain			–			–			–			–
Sri Lanka			–			–			–			–
Sweden	25	1	26	2	1	3			–	2	1	3
Switzerland	1		1		1	1			–		1	1
Tajikistan	–		–			–			–			–
Thailand			–			–			–			–
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia			–			–			–			–
Timor-Leste			–			–			–			–
Togo	913	16	929	4		4	140		140	144		144
Tunisia			–	1		1			–	1		1
Turkey			–	6		6			–	6		6
Uganda			–			–			–			–
Ukraine			–			–			–			–
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	2		2			–			–			–
United Republic of Tanzania			–			–			–			–
United States of America	9	1	10			–			–			–
Uruguay			–			–			–			–
Vanuatu			–			–			–			–
Yemen	4		4	5		5			–	5		5
Zambia			–			–			–			–
Zimbabwe			–			–			–			–
Totals	**8 222**	**102**	**8 324**	**123**	**12**	**135**	**800**	**39**	**839**	**923**	**51**	**974**